History: The Stone Age

Year 3 Autumn 2

Key Dates

2,000,000 BC	The first real humans (Homo habilis) appear – they used simple stone tools and built shelters.
650,000 BC	Early humans start to use hand axes.
500,000 BC	The first members of the Homo genus live in Britain.
200,000 BC	Great sheets of ice cover Britain and food becomes scarce – early humans are forced to leave.
35,000 BC	Homo sapiens arrive in Europe and Neanderthals die out.
10,000 BC	'The Ice Age' comes to an end in Britain – this marks the beginning of the Mesolithic period.
6,000 BC	Britain is cut off from the continent by rising sea levels.
4,000 BC	Farming begins - crops such as barley and wheat are grown.
3,000 BC	The first part of Stonehenge is built.

Agriculture	The raising of crops and animals for human use.
Artefacts	An object made by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest.
Hunter-Gatherer	A person who meets their needs by hunting animals and gathering plants.
Tools	Objects used to improve the performance of a task.
Paleolithic Era	The earliest part of the Stone Age characterised by tools made of crudely chipped stone and by cave art.
Mesolithic Era	The middle period of the Stone Age between the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods, marked by the appearance of microlithic tools and weapons.
Neolithic Era	The last period of the Stone Age when humans began to develop agriculture and use tools and weapons.
Settler	A person who settles in a new colony or moves into a new country.
Nomad	A person with no fixed address who travels around looking for food.

Historical Concepts

Change and continuity- There were lots of things going on at any one time in the past. Some changed rapidly while others remained relatively continuous. We can look at these at face value and consider things that were continuous and explain why, and things that were changing and explain why.
Cause and consequence- This concept considers the 'how and why' of history. The causes look for 'what were the actions/beliefs/circumstances…?' that led to a change or event that we examine, and then the consequences of these.

Key Facts

The Stone Age is divided into three different periods:
Paleolithic or Old Stone Age,
Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age and
Neolithic or New Stone Age.

During the Stone Age, people had a nomadic lifestyle - kept moving from place to place in search of food.

They stayed in caves where they cooked meat and drew art on the walls.

Early Stone Age humans were hunter-gatherers.
The Cheddar Man was the first full human skeleton found in Britain. He has helped scientists build a picture of life in the Mesolithic period.

Enquiry Questions

Who lived in Britain in the 'old' Stone Age?
What do artefacts and cave art tell us about how Stone Age people survived?
Where did the Cheddar Man originally come from?
In what ways did things change around 4000 BC?

Website Links

Why don't you…

- Create a time line of key dates from the Stone Age?
- Create a replica of a tool from the stone age?

Historical Skills

Chronology:
Describe events and periods using the words: BC, AD and decade.
Describe events and periods using the words: ancient and century.
Historical knowledge and interpretation:
Appreciate that the early civilisations would not have communicated as we do or have eaten as we do.
Historical enquiry:
Recognise the part that archaeologists have had in helping us understand more about what happened in the past.